

**COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA ITEM TRANSMITTAL**

(1) DEPARTMENT Administrative Office	(2) MEETING DATE 10/7/2014	(3) CONTACT/PHONE Lisa Howe/781-5011	
(4) SUBJECT Thirty-day update on current drought conditions and related management actions for the Board's review of the continuing need for the March 11, 2014 proclamation of local emergency pursuant to Government Code section 8630. All Districts.			
(5) RECOMMENDED ACTION It is recommended that the Board receive the thirty-day update on current drought conditions and related management actions establishing the need to continue the proclamation of local emergency due to drought conditions in San Luis Obispo County.			
(6) FUNDING SOURCE(S)	(7) CURRENT YEAR FINANCIAL IMPACT \$0.00	(8) ANNUAL FINANCIAL IMPACT \$0.00	(9) BUDGETED? Yes
(10) AGENDA PLACEMENT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consent <input type="checkbox"/> Presentation <input type="checkbox"/> Hearing (Time Est. ____) <input type="checkbox"/> Board Business (Time Est. ____)			
(11) EXECUTED DOCUMENTS <input type="checkbox"/> Resolutions <input type="checkbox"/> Contracts <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinances <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A			
(12) OUTLINE AGREEMENT REQUISITION NUMBER (OAR) N/A		(13) BUDGET ADJUSTMENT REQUIRED? BAR ID Number: N/A <input type="checkbox"/> 4/5 Vote Required <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	
(14) LOCATION MAP N/A	(15) BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT? No	(16) AGENDA ITEM HISTORY <input type="checkbox"/> N/A Date: <u>3/11/2014, 4/8/2014, 5/6/2014,</u> <u>6/3/2014, 6/17/2014, 7/15/2014, 8/12/2014,</u> <u>9/9/2014</u>	
(17) ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE REVIEW Guy Savage			
(18) SUPERVISOR DISTRICT(S) All Districts.			

County of San Luis Obispo



TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Administrative Office / Lisa Howe
781-5011

DATE: 10/7/2014

SUBJECT: Thirty-day update on current drought conditions and related management actions for the Board's review of the continuing need for the March 11, 2014 proclamation of local emergency pursuant to Government Code section 8630. All Districts.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Board receive the thirty-day update on current drought conditions and related management actions establishing the need to continue the proclamation of local emergency due to drought conditions in San Luis Obispo County.

DISCUSSION

Background

On March 11, 2014, the Board adopted a resolution proclaiming a local emergency due to drought conditions in San Luis Obispo County. Section 8630 of the California Government Code and County Code Chapter 2.80.070 (2) require that the Board of Supervisors review the need for continuing the local emergency at least every 30 days until such emergency is terminated. The Board also directed staff to return every 30 days to provide an update on the status of actions by the Drought Task Force, including a report on the analysis regarding local water conditions, local responses, conservation and outreach projects, and the State Water Project.

The last drought update was on September 9, 2014. This is the eighth update since the proclamation of a local emergency on March 11, 2014. This month's drought update is on the consent agenda as drought conditions remain unchanged and there were no major actions requiring further discussion that have occurred since the last update. A Water Summit will be held during the October 14, 2014 Board meeting and will provide a detailed update of current conditions including challenges and response plans (Attachment 4).

The Drought Task Force continues to meet regularly to coordinate drought monitoring, impact assessments, responses to emergency health and safety, and public communication and outreach. The task force prepared the Monthly Drought Update (Attachment 1) to inform the Board on current drought conditions and related management actions. Current drought conditions confirm the need to continue the proclamation of local emergency.

Current Conditions

The latest U.S. Drought Monitor report released September 25, 2014 indicates San Luis Obispo County remains at the D4 – Exceptional Drought intensity rating (Attachment 2). Approximately 95% of California is at a level D-2 Severe Drought or worse with 58% of the state at a D-4 level. Reservoir levels remain significantly lower than the average percentage capacity for this time of year including: Nacimiento 17% (64,750 acre feet); Lopez 45% (22,421 acre feet); Salinas 24% (5,759 acre feet); and Whale Rock 48% (18,754 acre feet) of capacity (Attachment 3).

An early season cold front is expected to bring rain to Northern California in the last week of September. This cold front should pass through San Luis Obispo County bringing an increase in the marine layer and producing pockets of mist and drizzle, although significant rain is not likely.

Impacts

Agricultural Conditions

Drought impacts continue to evolve affecting different parts of the County in varying degrees. The most recent responses to the Agricultural Producer Survey report either no change in conditions or conditions have become worse in the last 30 days. Livestock producers report they continue to sell animals and many have applied for disaster assistance programs. Even if average rainfall is received in 2015, producers reported it will take more than three years to recover. Vegetable growers report that if drought conditions persist they may idle ground or limit new plantings in 2015.

Domestic Wells

The number of dry groundwater wells, small streams, springs, and creeks are increasing as the drought continues. The County continues to receive calls from individuals who are experiencing problems with their domestic wells; however, determining how many wells have gone dry is proving to be challenging. State agencies are reporting this is a problem statewide. The Governor's Drought Task Force created an online intake form for use by local, state, or tribal and federal agencies to document domestic water issues. While this is recognized as a good concept, it was noted by a number of counties that people continue to hesitate to give out information related to their wells and other water sources having gone dry. The Drought Task Force is considering other tools to survey residents in order to gather countywide totals to inform and coordinate state assistance and response to mitigate drought impacts. Individuals with domestic water issues are encouraged to contact County Environmental Health at (805) 781-554.

Fire Conditions

Due to drought conditions, above normal large fire potential will continue across the state into fall. Forecasts indicate the County of San Luis Obispo will have an above normal fire potential throughout October. In order to reduce potential ignitions CAL FIRE San Luis Obispo continues to suspend all burning permits and open fires within the State Responsibility Areas and within the Local Responsibility Area under contract with CAL FIRE.

Economic Conditions

Negative economic impacts continue to mount due to drought conditions. The San Luis Obispo County Workforce Investment Board (WIB) is gathering information on local drought-related job impacts. This is part of a statewide survey by the California Labor and Workforce Development Agency (LWDA) as part of an ongoing online survey to inform the Governor's Drought Relief Task Force of the drought's ripple effects. The WIB's Drought Business Impact survey is available at <http://sloworkforce.com/drought-survey/>. Though the WIB is hearing that there are impacts, the County does not have any "reportable" impacts due to the State's requirements for reporting (i.e. specific business name, address, etc.). The County, along with the Department of Social Services, continues to explore options for collecting drought impact data and increasing survey response numbers.

The County continues to identify assistance programs to help rural communities, businesses and individuals impacted by California's ongoing drought conditions. Information regarding drought assistance for rural homeowners has been placed on the County Drought Conditions and Water Conservation webpage. Rural Development, an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), delivers a number of programs to help rural communities, businesses and individuals impacted by California's ongoing drought conditions.

Conservation Efforts

County Facilities and Golf

General Services continues to lead water conservation efforts at county facilities. To date, Facility Services has retrofitted 35 buildings with low-flow fixtures, saving an estimated 3,000 gallons per week. Collaboration between County staff and California Men's Colony resulted in the discovery of a broken water line delivering recycled water to Dairy Creek Golf Course, which was repaired within days of the discovery.

Emergency Actions

As noted when the proclamation was made, the proclamation continues to provide authority for unforeseen needed actions. As also noted, proclamation provides a statement to State and Federal agencies of the seriousness of the County's situation.

No new emergency actions have been taken specific to the drought in this reporting period.

Public Comment Period Opens on DWR's Funding Recommendations for IRWM Drought Projects

The Department of Water Resources (DWR) on Sept. 23 announced its recommendations for \$200 million in grants for projects designed to alleviate the impacts of the current drought and improve regional drought preparedness. Although the County's application for \$12,186,321 was ranked third highest in the State (out of 42), the State Department of Water Resources grant review staff marked the application as "Disqualified due to CASGEM noncompliance", contrary to previous understandings between our two agencies (CASGEM is the "California Statewide Groundwater Elevation Monitoring" system). As a result, County staff is making additional changes to our CASGEM submittal and expects to have the disqualification reversed before the October 8 deadline.

Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Board review and receive the attached update. The update highlights the existence of continuing drought conditions in San Luis Obispo County. Review of this update by the Board fulfills the Board's duty to review the need to continue the proclamation of a local emergency due to the existence of drought conditions pursuant to Government Code section 8630. No other Board action is necessary.

Note: Any regulations issued because of the local drought emergency would be subject to Board approval. The local emergency proclamation adopted by the Board on March 11, 2014, will remain in effect until terminated by your Board.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT/IMPACT

At the onset of the Governor's declaration and under the direction of the County Administrative Officer, a County Drought Task Force was formed. The Drought Task Force is comprised of multiple County departments, including: the Administrative Office, Office of Emergency Services, Public Works Department, General Services, County Fire (CAL FIRE), Agricultural Commissioner, Planning and Building, Farm Advisor, Health Agency, and County Counsel. All member departments provided input for this report.

County OES continues to be in regular contact with Cal OES to receive and provide situation status information.

The Public Works Department continues to coordinate with local water purveyors and cities.

Public Health is coordinating with relevant State agencies, including the State California Department of Public Health and Emergency Medical Services Authority Health Coordination Center.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The long-term financial impact on the local economy, including the demand on County and other legal agency services, cannot be forecast at this time. The County continues to track drought-related costs. As of September 24, 2014, tracked labor costs associated with the drought total \$241,002.

RESULTS

Accepting the update prepared by the Drought Task Force, which establishes the existence of conditions of drought, confirms the need to continue the proclamation of a local emergency. Maintaining the proclamation of local emergency will continue to allow for the Public Works Department and other agencies to take immediate actions needed by allowing temporary reduction of certain regulatory and purchasing requirements. This will also permit County staff to assist in drought-related work and tasks outside their normal scope of duties in the capacity of Disaster Service Workers under Government Code section 3100. In addition, acceptance of the update from the Drought Task Force confirms the continuing existence of severe drought conditions and will also serve as notice to the State of our dire conditions and a reminder to all of the serious drought conditions facing the County and State.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1- Monthly Drought Update
Attachment 2- USDA Drought Monitor Map
Attachment 3- Local Reservoir Conditions
Attachment 4- Water Summit Flyer